

Message Text

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60

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 IO-14 ISO-00 VO-03 SR-02 ORM-03 CIAE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 INSE-00 SAJ-01 SCA-01 NSC-07

SP-03 SS-20 PA-04 PRS-01 USIA-15 L-03 DRC-01 /125 W

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R 041422Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7570

INFO AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION USUN

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD BY POUCH

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 4943

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CVIS UR US IS PINT SREF

SUBJECT: SOVIET OFFICIALS COMMENT ON JEWISH EMIGRATION

ROME FOR EMBASSY AND INS

1. SUMMARY: AT TWO MOSCOW RECEPTIONS THIS WEEK SOVIET OFFICIALS RESPONSIBLE FOR VISA OR EMIGRATION AFFAIRS HAVE OFFERED VARIOUS COMMENTS TO AMCONSOFFS ON RECENTLY NOTED DECLINE IN SOVIET JEWISH EMIGRATION. JUDGING FROM THEIR COMMENTS OFFICIAL SOVIET EXPLANATION IS THATSUBSTANTIALY SMALLER NUMBER OF SOVIET JEWS ARE APPLYING IN 1974 FOR EMIGRATION TO ISRAEL. END SUMMARY

2. AT SPASO HOUSE RECEPTION APRIL 1 AND AGAIN AT HUNGARIAN NATIONAL DAY APRIL 3, IVAN YUDKIN WHO HEADS MFA CONSULAR ADMINISTRATION AREA OVERSEEING EMIGRATION TO ISRAEL TOLD CONSOFF HE WAS AWARE OF DECLINE AND ATTRIBUTED IT TO REDUCED NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS BY SOVIET JEWS. WHEN SUBJECT AROSE
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AGAIN AT APRIL 3 RECEPTION, YUDKIN INDICATED HE HAD JUST

SPOKEN TO ANDREI VEREIN, CHIEF OF ALL-UNION OVIR, WHO TOLD HIM SOVIET JEWS WERE NOW APPLYING FOR EXIT PERMISSION AT RATE ONLY 50 PERCENT OF THAT OF LATE 1973.

3. YUDKIN ADAMANTLY REJECTED SUGGESTION THAT REFUSAL RATE MIGHT HAVE BEEN INCREASED. MFA CONSULAR ADMINISTRATION FIRST SECRETARY VASIL'YEV (CHIEF OF WEST EUROPE AND AMERICA SECTION) CAME TO YUDKIN'S SUPPORT BY STATING (CHARACTERISTICALLY) THAT TREND ONLY PROVES "THERE ARE SOME INTELLIGENT JEWS TOO." BOTH OFFICIALS EXPLAINED MORE SERIOUSLY THAT JEWISH POPULATION IN USSR HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY AWARE OF PROBLEMS OF ADJUSTMENT AND EMPLOYMENT IN ISRAEL, AND FACT THAT "MANY" ARE SEEKING TO RETURN. YUDKIN AND VASIL'YEV THEN GAVE LINE THAT REFUSALS ONLY ARE "TEMPORARY" IN NATURE FOR "SECURITY" REASONS.

4. DEPUTY DIRECTOR CONSULAR ADMINISTRATION REZNICHENKO, WHEN ASKED TO COMMENT ON APPARENT EMIGRATION DECLINE OVER RECENT MONTHS, ALSO CLAIMED THAT THERE HAD BEEN NO INCREASE IN REFUSALS TO EXPLAIN PHENOMENON. HE SAID HE WAS "COMPETENT TO ADVISE THAT SOVIET PROCEDURES ARE NOW THE EASIEST EVER" FOR THOSE SEEKING TO EMIGRATE. ALTHOUGH NOT DIRECTLY PRESSED, REZNICHENKO SEEMED TO SAY THERE WERE NO NEW PROCEDURES WHICH WOULD CREATE BACKLOG. TO ILLUSTRATE EASE OF EMIGRATING, REZNICHENKO SAID THERE IS JOKE NOW CIRCULATING ABOUT SOVIET JEW WHO EMIGRATED FOUR TIMES TO ISRAEL ONLY TO RETURN IMMEDIATELY TO SOVIET UNION. REZNICHENKO SAID SOVIET AUTHORITIES FINALLY INQUIRED, AND EMIGRANT ADMITTED HE DIDN'T CARE FOR CONDITIONS IN EITHER COUNTRY BUT "SERVIS" ON FLIGHTS BOTH WAYS APPEALED TO HIM.

5. IN SEPARATE CONVERSATION AT APRIL 3 RECEPTION, ROMANIAN CONSUL CONFIRMED SOVIET-ROMANIAN BORDER REMAINS CLOSED TO TRANSITING SOVIET JEWS.

6. IN BRIEF EXCHANGE AT APRIL 3 RECEPTION FADEYEV OF MOSCOW OVIR ONLY COMMENTED THAT SOVIET JEWS ARE BEGINNING TO APPRECIATE LIFE IN USSR IS BETTER THAN IN ISRAEL.

7. COMMENT: WE WERE STRUCK BY THE OFFICIALS' UNANIMITY
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IN ATTRIBUTING EMIGRATION DECLINE TO DROP-OFF IN RATE OF NEW SOVIET JEWISH APPLICATIONS. THOUGH IT IS POSSIBLE SOVIET OFFICIALS ARE PROMOTING AN EXPLANATION WITHOUT BASIS IN FACT IN ORDER TO CONCEAL FOR TIME BEING A CHANGE IN PROCEDURES OR POLICY, SEVERAL EMBASSY JEWISH SOURCES HAVE ALSO REPORTED A RECENT DECLINE IN NUMBER APPLYING EMIGRATE TO ISRAEL. THEY HAVE ATTRIBUTED DECLINE IN APPLICATIONS, HOWEVER, TO TIGHTENING OF PROCEDURES (MOSCOW 4167) AND

INCREASED DISCOURAGEMENT AMONG EDUCATED JEWS BECAUSE OF
INTENSIFIED SCREENING OF THOSE WITH HIGHER EDUCATION.
PROMINENT JEWISH FILM-WRITER TOLD CONSOFF APRIL 4 THAT OVER
PAST TWO MONTHS SEVENTY JEWISH FAMILIES KNOWN TO HIM HAD
BEEN REFUSED IN MOSCOW, INCREASING NUMBER OF REFUSED
FAMILIES IN MOSCOW TO TWO HUNDRED. SOURCE, WHO JUST
RECEIVED EXIT PERMISSION, SAID SOVIET AUTHORITIES SEEM
INCREASINGLY CONCERNED ABOUT EMIGRATION OF INTELLECTUALS;
WHILE SCREENING HAS ALWAYS BEEN TIGHT FOR SCIENTIFIC/
TECHNICAL ELITE, HE SAID REFUSALS NOW BEING METED OUT TO
JOURNALISTS, WRITERS AND TEACHERS AS WELL.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PERSONAL OPINION, JEWS, SOCIAL RECEPTIONS, EMIGRANTS, TRAVEL CONTROLS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 APR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974MOSCOW04943
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740076-0623
From: MOSCOW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740467/aaaacjql.tel
Line Count: 127
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 MAR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19 MAR 2002 by collinp0>; APPROVED <06 MAY 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOVIET OFFICIALS COMMENT ON JEWISH EMIGRATION ROME FOR EMBASSY AND INS
TAGS: CVIS, PINT, SREF, UR, US, IS, (YUDKIN, IVAN), (VEREIN, ANDREI), (REZNICHENKO)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005